

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BISHOP of Utah addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Georgia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DESERVE BETTER THAN A HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL DRAFTED IN SECRECY, AND THEY WILL DEMAND IT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I have a message from the citizens of Georgia: don't dare bring a bill before this House that spends one dime of taxpayer money to provide health care for illegal aliens.

During the month of August, the citizens of my State and the country spoke out on health care reform. Their outcry was unlike anything we have seen in recent years. Town hall meetings, TEA parties, freedom rallies, they all became the forum in which the public protest was intended to send a message to this House.

But here we are 2 months later, and none of the concerns of August have been addressed. In particular, no version of the health care reform that is before the House includes the language that I offered that would require proof of citizenship before receiving taxpayer-funded health care. Now it appears that the House is in a holding pattern. Media reports indicate that Speaker PELOSI is drafting her own version of health care reform. Other reports suggest that President Obama and the White House are drafting another bill.

What appears very clear is that these bills are being drafted in secret and behind closed doors and that there is no intention to submit them to the House committees for hearings or for mark-ups.

I call on the Speaker and the President to open up the process, allow Republicans such as me, the ranking member of the Health Care Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee, to participate in the drafting of this bill. It's time for the law to clearly state that those who want taxpayer-funded health care must prove and must verify that they are citizens. I have language that will make that happen. But thus far it has been rejected along a party-line vote. Today the other body rejected a similar proposal along a party-line vote.

If health care is to be written in secret, if the normal committee processes are bypassed, if illegal aliens are allowed to receive taxpayer-funded health care, if a bill is rushed through this House with no opportunity to read it, if any of these things happen, I predict that the historic outcry of the American people during August will pale in comparison to the voices of concern that they will raise as a result of that abuse.

Madam Speaker, this issue is too big, it is too important to our people, it is too destructive of our free market enterprise system to be cloaked in secrecy and rushed through this body in a partisan wheelbarrow. If that happens, the Members of this House should be outraged. But, more importantly, the American people will be outraged.

Tyranny by whatever name it bears and whatever iron fist it raises is still tyranny. The American people deserve better and they will demand it.

EXTOLLING THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, times of crisis make or break reputations. My home State of Georgia experienced such a crisis in the past 2 weeks, with rainfall and floods believed to set the benchmark for a 500-year period.

Last week President Obama declared parts of Georgia a disaster area, opening up Federal aid, and the House of Representatives paid tribute to both the victims of the flood and the courageous emergency workers who put their own lives on the line to protect lives and property.

Tragically, despite our best efforts, at least 10 Georgians died in those floods. Seven of those deaths were in Douglas County, part of which I represent. The State of Georgia estimates that 20,000 homes suffered extensive damage, thousands were at least temporarily homeless, and damages have reached \$500 million and could rise from there.

The worst destruction occurred in the upper Chattahoochee River basin. Because the rising water flowing down the river could have easily snowballed and ravaged areas south of West Point Dam, we're fortunate that areas of west Georgia didn't experience devastation on the scale seen in north Georgia and metro Atlanta.

While areas southwest of Atlanta did see some inevitable flooding during the heaviest rainfalls on record, counties south of West Point Lake benefited from the excellent management of the lake by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In recent years the Corps of Engineers has battled both extremes from divvying up sacred water resources during a painful drought in 2007 to

taming raging floodwaters in recent weeks.

The Corps has performed important water management tasks that most Americans take for granted. The Corps takes abuse when it has to issue tough decisions, but its many good works go unnoticed.

I want to correct that oversight today. The Corps management of the basin and specifically West Point Lake during the floods unquestionably saved lives and property. The Corps has acted with foresight and skill, and my constituents in west Georgia benefited from the actions immensely.

When heavy rains began to fall in north Georgia and metro Atlanta, the Corps prepared early for the deluge of water heading downstream and strategically released water from the lake to create more storage capacity. A leading expert on West Point Lake, Joe Maltese of LaGrange, called the Corps' early maneuvering "brilliant."

"Throughout the week of the floods, the Corps used the water storage capacity it had been given to its fullest and held nature's fury back to protect as much and as many as they could downstream below West Point Dam," Maltese said.

□ 1600

The Corps walked a tightrope trying to assure the dam held back all it could against a mighty surge, and they succeeded.

Even though this year's flood set the 500-year benchmark, the Corps managed to keep the dam below record levels set in 2003 while at the same time regulating releases to prevent massive flooding below the dam.

Residents of Troup County, the county where West Point Lake is, have stood united in their praise of the Corps of Engineers. The LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce West Point Lake Committee gave the Corps a sincere thank you. And the city of West Point, which did suffer some flooding, is grateful that the Corps of Engineers prevented the worst from happening. "The Corps did an excellent job controlling the river," said West Point police chief David Kerr.

To that, I would like to add my gratitude and congratulations to the fine men and women of the Corps of Engineers for their efforts during a trying time for Georgia. When crisis hit, these public servants stood ready and able. When reputations could be made or broken, they made theirs. We will never know how many lives were saved by their actions, and for that we're all grateful. And the people of west Georgia want to commend the Army Corps of Engineers.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRAYSON. Last night here in this Chamber I gave a speech. I'm not

going to recount every single thing that I said, but I will point out that immediately after that speech, several Republicans asked me to apologize. Well, I would like to apologize. I would like to apologize to the dead. And here is why. According to this study, "Health Insurance and Mortality in U.S. Adults," which was published 2 weeks ago, 44,789 Americans die every year because they have no health insurance. That's right, 44,789 Americans die every year according to this Harvard study called Health Insurance and Mortality in U.S. Adults. You can see it by going to our Web site, grayson.house.gov.

That is more than 10 times the number of Americans who have died in the war in Iraq. It's more than ten times the number of Americans who died in 9/11. But that is just once. This is every single year. That's right, every single year. Take a look at this. Read it and weep. And I mean that. Read it and weep because of all the Americans who are dying because they don't have health insurance.

Now I think we should do something about that. And the Democratic health care plan does do something about that. It makes health care affordable to those who can't afford insurance, and it saves these people's lives. Let's remember that we should care about people even after they are born. So I call upon the Democratic Members of the House, I call upon the Republican Members of the House, and I call upon all of us to do our jobs for the sake of America, for the sake of those dying people and their families. I apologize to the dead and their families that we haven't voted sooner to end this holocaust in America.

VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I have now written Attorney General Eric Holder on four occasions asking for an explanation of the dismissal of an important voter intimidation case, *U.S. v. New Black Panther Party*. To date, the answers provided are scant and, in at least one important regard, factually inaccurate.

In 1981, I was the only member, Republican or Democrat, of the Virginia delegation in the House to vote for the Voting Rights Act and was harshly criticized by the editorial page of *The Richmond Times Dispatch*. And when I supported the act's reauthorization in 2006, I was again criticized by editorial pages. My commitment to voting rights is unquestioned. It is imperative that we protect all Americans' right to vote. This is a sacrosanct and inalienable right of any democracy.

This *New Black Panther Party* case was brought in January by career attorneys in the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division against the party

and several of its members for deploying uniformed men to a polling station in Philadelphia on Election Day last November to harass and intimidate voters, one of whom brandished a nightstick to voters. The public, and every Member, if they care, can view the video of the incident as well as other examples of the party's intimidation in a clip from the National Geographic Channel documentary entitled "Coming to a Polling Place Near You" posted on the Web. And it can be seen at www.electionjournal.org.

One of the witnesses of the Election Day incident, Bartle Bull, a veteran civil rights activist who served as Bobby Kennedy's New York campaign manager in 1968, has publicly called this "the most blatant form of voter intimidation" he has ever seen. He also reminded us that "Martin Luther King did not die to have people in jackboots with billy clubs block the doors of polling places, and neither did Robert Kennedy. It's an absolute disgrace."

In July, *The Washington Times* reported that improper political influence by Associate Attorney General Thomas Perrelli led to the dismissal of the case, a politicizing of career employees.

This inexplicable dismissal came over the objections of the career attorneys on the trial team as well as the department's own appeal office, which advised that the complaint was "sufficient to support the injunctions" sought by the career lawyers, and that the "government's predominant interest is preventing intimidation, threats and coercion against voters."

Despite this guidance urging that the department pursue a judgment in this case, it was dismissed in May over the career attorneys' objections. However, this unjustified dismissal has not gone unnoticed. I have worked with the Judiciary Committee Ranking Member LAMAR SMITH to demand answers from Attorney General Holder.

I am pleased that the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has also taken note of this case. The Commission has an important statutory responsibility to "investigate voting rights deprivation and make appraisals of Federal policies to enforce Federal voting rights laws."

Congress instilled this independent oversight responsibility of the Commission in statute, and it says: "All Federal agents shall fully cooperate with the Commission to the end that it may effectively carry out its functions and duties."

The Commission wrote to Attorney General Holder on June 16, June 22 and August 10 requesting answers on the dismissal of this case. It also voted at its September meeting to make its review of this case the primary focus of its 2009 independent report.

Earlier today, the Commission sent a fourth letter to Attorney General Eric Holder, which I submit for the RECORD, reiterating its request for information and asking him to respond no later

than October 14 or it will proceed with an investigation using its statutory authorities.

I applaud the Commission. I call on Attorney General Holder to answer the questions posed in my letters dated June 8, July 17, July 22 and July 31, as well as comply with the Commission's request for information so it may complete its report. I also urge the Attorney General to allow Members of Congress to meet with the career attorneys in the trial team and appeal the body so that they may answer legitimate questions.

Again, if Members of Congress want to see the case that Eric Holder has dropped, just go to www.electionjournal.org. It's the National Geographic channel. And you will see Eric Holder has to start answering the letters that the Civil Rights Commission sends and Members have sent.

Finally, the trial team should be allowed to bring the case again—per the guidance I obtained from the Congressional Research Service's American Law Division in its July 30 memo—to allow our nation's justice system to work as it was intended: impartially and without bias.

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS,

Washington, DC, September 30, 2009.

Hon. ERIC H. HOLDER, JR.,

Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Re: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Review and Report on the Implications of Enforcement Actions in *United States v. New Black Panther Party for Self-Defense*, Civ. No. 09-0065 SD (E.D. Pa.) (NBPP case)

DEAR ATTORNEY GENERAL HOLDER: The Commission requests that you instruct Department officials to fully cooperate, as 42 U.S.C. 1975b(e) requires, with our overdue information requests in the above-referenced matter. To that end, we also ask you to identify an individual who will exercise the substantive authority to coordinate the Department's responses to our current and future requests.

Pursuant to formal proceedings, the Commission initiated an inquiry into the implications of the Department's enforcement actions in the NBPP case as reflected in our letters to DOJ of June 16 and 22. We received a largely non-responsive letter from Portia Roberson in late July and none of the documents we requested. On August 7, the Commission voted 6-0, with two members abstaining, to expand its investigation by sending a follow-up letter to the Department. On August 10, the Commission addressed its letter to you, explaining our need for the information. For example, we stressed our need for information on previous voter intimidation investigations so that we could determine whether the Department's action in the NBPP case constitutes a change in policy and, if so, what the implications of that change might be.

At our most recent meeting on September 11, 2009, the Commission voted to make its review of the implications of the NBPP matter the subject of its annual enforcement report. The Commission was aware that the Department's Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) had initiated an inquiry into some aspects of the NBPP case to determine whether further review is warranted. Although a letter from Ms. Roberson of September 9 expresses the Department's desire to delay any response to the Commission until the OPR investigation is complete, you